



WESTCHESTER TOWN CENTER News

IMPORTANT INFORMATION



Information about the LAWA Specific Plan Amendment Study (SPAS) and the proposed move of the airport's northernmost runway can be found at laxspas.org



To contact the Office of L.A. City Councilman Mike Bonin, who represents the Westchester Town Center BID area, please call (310) 568-8772 or visit cd11.lacity.org



To contact the Westchester Streetscape Improvement Association please call (310) 225-7630 or visit

westchesterstreetscape.org

YOU ARE INVITED ...

The public is invited to attend WTC BID Board meetings, which are held at 10 am on the third Thursday of each month at Drollinger Properties, 8929 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Suite 130 in Westchester.

BID Pushes for Economic Development in Westchester

BID Joins Community Leaders, Other Organizations in Supporting New Restaurant on Vacant Parcel

Two years after The Grinder restaurant shut its doors, the vacant site on the northwest corner of Sepulveda and Manchester has become a haven for the homeless and an eyesore in Westchester's primary business district.

Now, Chick-Fil-A has proposed a new drive-through restaurant at the site.

"This is the kind of investment and economic development we need," said Don Duckworth, executive director of the Westchester Town Center Business Improvement District. "We don't need many more months of an eyesore that reduces property values and creates health, crime and safety concerns because of the homeless people it attracts."

The proposed project includes the development of a one-story, 2,867-square-foot fast-food restaurant with a drive-through and outdoor seating area. A total of 29 vehicle parking spaces and four bicycle parking spaces would be provided onsite.

Duckworth said the restaurant has already agreed to improved landscaping, creation of an outdoor dining area and other improvements that will make the area more walkable and appealing for pedestrians – something that BID has strived for along Sepulveda Boulevard. In order to move forward, the project needs a zone change as well as a conditional-use permit to allow a drive-through fast-food use on a lot that adjoins a lot with a residential use.

The Westchester Town Center BID has joined the LAX Coastal Chamber, Westchester Streetscape Improvement Association and the Neighborhood Council of Westchester Playa, as well as scores of local residents and business owners, in supporting the project.

"The choice is not between Chick-Fil-A and a steakhouse, which is what many people might like to see there ... it is between Chick-Fil-A and, perhaps, many more months or years of a vacant eyesore on one of Westchester's most well-traveled intersections," said Neighborhood Council President Cyndi Hensch.

Over the past four years, Chick-fil-A, Inc. and its franchised restaurant operators have given more than \$68 million in contributions to more than 700 educational and charitable organizations and have provided millions of dollars in food donations all across America. In addition, the restaurant has already agreed to bring its scholarship program, family enrichment programs and charitable giving to the Westchester community.

"It is unfortunate that some have chosen to stifle economic development rather than embrace this prospect to revitalize a vacant property by bringing in a restaurant that will give back to the neighborhood," said LAX Chamber President/CEO Christina Davis. "Chick-Fil-A is doing the proper outreach and mitigation to be a good corporate citizen. The Chamber welcomes the opportunity to work with businesses that support our community."

What Is the Westchester Town Center BID?

The mission of the WTC BID is to: proactively enhance the vitality of the business district, its stakeholders, and the community by providing an inviting environment; streetscape landscaping and beautification; marketing and promotions; new business attraction; and policy advocacy.

It is a property based District formed by a vote of the commercial property owners that assess themselves for its costs of operation. Some 129 properties are included, and it is one of about 45 other business improvement districts in the City of Los Angeles. The WTC BID is managed by a non-profit corporation pursuant to its adopted Management District Plan and contract with the City. Its Board of Directors meets monthly and invites stakeholder participation.

Westchester Town Center BID Board of Directors

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helping the homeless

A Hand Up, Not A Hand Out Gets Homeless Woman Off the Streets

For Susannah, living on the streets of Westchester had become a way of life. She panhandled when she could during the day and stayed awake at night, afraid a group of homeless men would steal her few remaining belongings.

Then, the Westchester Town Center BID, LAPD Officer Peter Abskharon and Chaplain Regina Weller of the Venice Foursquare Church stepped in.

"Susannah was a sweetie," said Weller, who, along with her husband, have been helping the homeless get off the streets for years. "She couldn't even remember how long she had been homeless, that's how long it has been."

Weller spent several hours talking to Susannah and trying to match her up with an appropriate place to go to obtain the resources she needed.

"The place where I took her had a case worker to address her immediate needs so that she could do the things she needed to do to re-enter society," said Weller, who said that Susannah now has a permanent place to live with her own room and three meals a day. "She has three children, and she wanted help in finding one of her sons, so we're going to help her with that."

"This is one of those successes. She was comfortable with us, so we were able to find her a place that could address her needs."

Weller said that 22% of the nation's homeless population is located in Southern California, due largely to the mild climate.

"But that creates a burden for the neighbors, the businesses," Weller said. "We're really active with the police. The police know who is in town, and we know about placement after doing it for so many years. It's a pretty good marriage."

Don Duckworth, executive director of the Westchester Town Center BID, said the success of Susannah is a reminder that the homeless benefit far more from connecting with those who can provide them with the resources they need than from donations of money or food on the street.

"I know people think they're helping, but they're really not," said Duckworth, who said the BID also works with PATH (People Assisting the Homeless) to contact homeless individuals in the area and get them the help they need. "Giving someone a couple of bucks or buying them a meal just perpetuates the problem. Connecting them with a group like PATH generates much more positive results."

Through PATH's comprehensive network of programs and services, homeless individuals can be connected to a myriad of services including mental health, medical, substance abuse, employment, and immediate housing opportunities. PATH also regularly coordinates with local LAPD officers as well as other public and private social services agencies.

For more information about PATH, please visit www.epath.org, or contact the Westchester Outreach Team at (323) 228-3216.